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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, IN, PFOR, BD, PAK, OREP (MCGOVERN, GEORGE)

SUBJ: SENATOR MCGOVERN'S JAN 9 PRESS CONFERENCE

BEGIN SUMMARY: SENATOR MCGOVERN GAVE A WELL-ATTENDED 40--
MINUTE PRESS CONFERENCE ON JANUARY 9 FOLLOWING AN HOUR LONG
MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER GANDHI. A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER
OF QUESTIONS POSED BY THE CORRESPONDENTS PRESENT SOUGHT THE
CONTENT OF MRS GANDHI'S VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS JUST-
COMPLETED MEETING. HE SPOKE ON A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS,
INCLUDING RECENT CIA ALLEGATIONS IN INDIA, INDO-US RELATIONS,
DETENTE AND BANGLADESH. SOME OF HIS COMMENTS WERE OMITTED
FROM REPORTS IN THE INDIAN PRESS. END SUMMARY.

1. NEW DELHI DAILIES CARRIED JANUARY 10 EXTENSIVE
ACCOUNTS OF PRESS CONFERENCE GIVEN BY SENATOR MCGOVERN ON
JANUARY 9 IN NEW DELHI. SEVERAL OF THE HEADLINES:
"INDO-US TIES TO GET BETTER: MCGOVERN" (INDIAN EXPRESS);
"INDO-US DIFFERENCES SUPERFICIAL: MCGOVERN" (TIMES OF
INDIA), AND "IMPROVEMENT SEEN IN INDO-US TIES"
(NATIONAL HERALD).

2. INDO-US RELATIONS WAS THE MOST PROMINENTLY REPORTED
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OF THE MANY TOPICS ADDRESSED BY THE SENATOR. MCGOVERN

WAS QUOTED AS SAYING HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT INDO-US RELATIONS "ARE GOING TO GET BETTER IN THE DAYS AHEAD" AND THAT HE DID NOT SEE ANY "INSURMOUNTABLE DIFFERENCES" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE SAW "NO REAL REASON FOR ANY OTHER THAN FRIENDLY AND CONSTRUCTIVE RELATONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES." HE WAS REPORTED SAYING HE HAD "AN INFORMAL, STRAIGHTFORWARD AND CORDIAL DISCUSSION" WITH PRIME MINISTER GANDHI."

3. CIA: ALL MAJOR PAPERS HIGHLIGHTED THE SENATOR'S DISCUSSION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON CIA. HE WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT MRS GANDHI HAD INFORMED SHE HAD NO "SPECIFIC PROOF" OF CIA ACTIVITIES IN INDIA BUT THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE OF CIA INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD HAD CAUSED CONCERN HERE, AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD TOLD HIM SHE DID NOT SINGLE OUT THE US IN HER REFERENCE TO THE EXTERNAL THREAT. THESE THREATS COULD EMANATE FROM OTHER SOURCES ALSO.

3. DIEGO GARCIA: QUESTIONED WHETHER THIS WAS DISCUSSED, MR MCGOVERN IS REPORTED TO HAVE REPLIED: "SHE (MRS GANDHI) BELIEVES THE AMERICAN BASE IN THE ISLAND WILL INVITE ACTION FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND PERHAPS FROM OTHERS AND THIS WILL BE BAD FOR THE REGION."

4. SUB-CONTINENT: MOST PAPERS REPORTED MCGOVERN AS SAYING THAT MRS GANDHI EXPRESSED INDIA'S FEAR ABOUT THE MASSIVE BUILD-UP BY PAKISTAN ALONG THE BORDER WHILE ADDING THAT THE DOOR TO PINDI MUST NOT BE SHUT AND THAT NEW DELHI WANTS TO ENCOURAGE STABILITY IN BANGLADESH.

5. DETENTE AND SINO-US RELATIONS: THE SENATOR IS REPORTED AS SAYING PRIME MINISTER GANDHI "WHOLEHEARTEDLY" SUPPORTED AMERICAN MOVES FOR DETENTE WITH BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA AND EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE ANXIETY ABOUT THE CHINESE TENDENCY TO ENCOURAGE VIOLENCE AND DISSIDENT ELEMENTS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

6. INDIA'S INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT: REPORTAGE QUOTED THE SENATOR AS SAYING THAT MANY PEOPLE IN THE US ADMIRED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MRS GANDHI. THEY WERE AWARE OF THE HIGH PREMIUM INDIA GAD OKACED IB DENICRATUC FREEDOM. HE IS QUOTED AS REPEATING COMPLAINTS MADE BY MRS GANDHI ABOUT ALLEGED MIS-STATEMENTS AND MISREPRESENTATIONS IN THE FOREIGN PRESS. THE SENATOR WAS ALSO QUOTED AS SAYING: "8 SUPPOSE ONE HAS TO RECOGNIZE THE GAINS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE." LEAD PARAGRAPH OF OTHER NEWSPAPERS STRESSED IMPROVEMENT IN INDO-US RELATIONS.

7. THE HINDI-LANGUAGE INDEPENDENT DAILY NAV BHARAT TIMES EDITORIAL ON JANUARY 12 SURMISED THAT THE GANDI-MCGOVERN TALKS WILL INCREASE "THE TRADE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES." IT ALSO EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE MCGOVERN VISIT WILL BE FOLLOWED BY THAT OF PRESIDENT FORD "WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR A HEALTHY FRIFNDSHIP" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

8. OMISSIONS IN PRESS REPORTING: A NUMBER OF SIGNIFI-
CANT COMMENTS MADE BY SENATOR MCGOVERN WHICH WERE NOT
CARRIED IN THE PRESS REPORTS OF HIS NEWS CONFERENCE FOLLOW:

9. AMERICAN VIEW OF EMERGENCY: WHEN ASKED HIS VIEWS ON
THE HARSH AND UNSYMPATHETIC AMERICAN ATTITUDE OF THE
EMERGENCY, MCGOVERN REPLIED, "I CANNOT ENDORSE ANY
INFRINGEMENT ON POLITICAL FREEDOMS. I'M A DEMOCRAT
WITH A SAMLL "D". I BELIEVE IN PERSONAL FREEDOMS, I
BELIEVE IN THE BILL OF RIGHTS, AND AS AN AMERICAN WITH
THAT PHILOSOPHY I COULDN'T ENDORSE ANY INFRIENGEMENT ON
TRADITIONAL POLITICAL FREEDOMS." AFTER CITING THE
PRIME MINISTER'S CLAIM OF THE EMERGENCY'S GAINS, HE ADDED,
"BUT I WOULD HOPE THAT TO WHATEVER EXTENT THE ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL LIFE IN THE COUNTRY IS IMPROVING, THAT THIS
WOULD HAVE BEEN A WAY FOR SOME OF THE RESTRICTIONS TO BE
RELAXED AND FOR INDIA TO MOVE AHEAD TOWARDS A POLITICAL
DEMOCRACY AS WELL ..."

10. ALLEGED HOSTILITY OF US ADMINISTRATION TOWARD
INDIA: IN RESPONSE TO INQUIRY ABOUT WHY THE AMERICAN
GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN HOSTILE TO INDIA IN CONTRAST TO
FEELINGS OF AMERICAN PEOPLE AND EVEN SEVERAL AMERICAN
AMBASSADORS IN NEW DELHI, SENATOR MCGOVERN ANSWERED,
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"I DON'T THINK IT IS CORRECT TO SAY THAT WE'VE ADOPTED
A HOSTILE ATTITUDE TOWADS THIS GOVERNMENT. AS A MATTER
O FACT, OVER THE YEARS MORE AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE
HAS GONE TO INDIA THAN TO NANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE WORLD.
THAT'S BEEN TRUE FOR THE LAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY AND
I WAS DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SOME OF THESE ACTIVITIES.
THE ENORMOUS SHIPMENTS OF GRAIN AND FOOD THAT CAME TO
INDIA IN THE YEARS AFTER MID 1950S. SO I DON'T THINK THAT
IT'S A CORRECT EVALUATION OF AMERICAN POLICY TO SAY THAT
IT HAS BEEN CONSISTENTLY HOSTILE TO INDIA. WE HAVE HAD
SOME DIFFERENCES BUT OUR GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN HOSTILE
TO INDIA AND NEIHER ARE OUR PEOPLE."

ASKED IF IN THE LIGHT OF CURRENT ATTACKS BY INDIA ON
THE US HE DELT THAT POLICY HAD BEEN CORRECT, SEN MCGOVERN

SAID, "YES, I HAVE NO REGRETS THAT WE DID WHAT WE DID IN INDIA. I THINK MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WOULD HAVE STARVED IN THIS COUNTRY HAD WE NOT HELPED. SO INSPITE OF ANY ARGUMENTS THAT MIGHT EXIST BETWEEN THE LEADERSHIP FROM TIME TO TIME IT IS IRRELEVANT IN TERMS OF OUR DESIRE TO COOPERATE IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STANDARDS OF LIFE IN INDIA AND ELSEWHERE."

11. ARMS BUILD-UP IN PAKISTAN: THE SENATOR ANSWERED A STRONG "NO" WHEN ASKED IF HE HAD NOTED ANY MAJOR ARMS BUILD-UP IN PAKISTAN.
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